

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 SAM-01 IO-10 OMB-01 NEA-10 /091 W

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R 290619Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5186

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 5920

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: PRC PROPAGANDA TREATMENT OF US

REF: HONG KONG 4912

SUMMARY: HEIGHTENED ANTI-US PROPAGANDA BY PEKING AS THE PRC ATTEMPTS TO REASSESS ITS SOUTHEAST ASIAN POLICIES FOLLOWING THE EVENTS IN INDOCHINA HAS DECLINED. PRC MEDIA ARE NOW CONCENTRATING UPON THE THEME OF A STRENGTHENED US CONTINUING TO PLAY AN ACTIVE WORLD ROLE. THIS ROLE, AS SEEN BY PEKING, IS ESSENTIALLY THAT OF COUNTERING SOVIET ATTEMPTS AT WORLD HEGEMONY. WE VIEW THE PRC PROPAGANDA AS INCREASINGLY FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE (IN PEKING'S EYES) ASPECTS OF US FOREIGN POLICY, ALTHOUGH PEKING WILL CONTINUE TO FEEL OBLIGED TO DRAG OUT ANTI-US STATEMENTS AS EVENTS WARRANT. END SUMMARY.

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1. THE CONVERGENCE OF VARIOUS EVENTS--COMMUNIST VICTORIES

IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM, THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF MAO'S MAY 20, 1970 SPEECH, AND KIM IL-SUNG'S VISIT TO PEKING--CREATED CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH ANTI-US INVECTIVE IN THE PRC MEDIA WAS AUTOMATICALLY HEIGHTENED. THE MORE RECENT MAYAGUEZ AFFAIR (ALONG WITH THE CONTINUING DEBATE OVER THE USE OF THAI BASES IN THIS OPERATION) AND LAOTIAN DEMANDS FOR AN END TO USAID ACTIVITIES HAVE SIMILARLY PROVIDED GROUND FOR ATTACKS ON US POLICIES, EITHER DIRECTLY BY THE PRC MEDIA OR AT LEAST IN NCNA REPLAYS OF FOREIGN NEWS REPORTS AND COMMENTS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PRC, IN ITS REASSESSMENT OF THE NEW SITUATION IN ASIA, AND MOST PARTICULARLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, FEELS REQUIRED TO APPEAR UNCHANGED IN ITS SUPPORT FOR REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS. THUS, ITS PROPAGANDA MUST KEEP UP WITH HANOI, THE SOVIETS AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN INSURGENT GROUPS.

2. GIVEN THIS ATMOSPHERE AND NEED FOR REVOLUTIONARY FERVOR AT THE MOMENT, WE BELIEVE THAT THE PRC ANTI-US PRONOUNCEMENTS HAVE REMAINED SOMEWHAT MORE CAUTIOUS THAN THEY COULD HAVE BEEN, ALTHOUGH PHRASES LIKE "PAPER TIGER" AND COMMENTS AGAINST A CONTINUING US MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND HAVE BEEN CREEPING INTO PRC MEDIA REPORTS WITH GREATER FREQUENCY. MOST OF THESE, AND ALL THOSE REFERRING TO A US MILITARY PULLOUT FROM THAILAND, HAVE BEEN IN NCNA REPLAYS OF FOREIGN PRESS REPORTING RATHER THAN IN THE PRC'S OWN OUTPUT. MOREOVER, AS THE STIMULUS FOR THE ANTI-US INVECTIVE HAS SUBSIDED, SO HAS THE ANTI-US PROPAGANDA.

3. BALANCING THESE ANTI-US PRONOUNCEMENTS, MORE RECENT PRC MEDIA REPORTING OF US ACTIVITIES IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD HAS LARGELY BEEN FAVORABLE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN REPORTING THE CENTO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING, NCNA INDICATED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS PRESENT AS AN OBSERVER AND QUOTED HIS STATEMENT AT THE MEETING THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD ASKED HIM TO UNDERSCORE THE "CONTINUED COMMITMENTS OF MY COUNTRY TO THE FUNDAMENTAL AIMS OF CENTO." SIMILARLY, THE NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS' MEETING, INCLUDING REMARKS BY DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER, WAS GIVEN PROMINENT ATTENTION, WHILE THE US TRACK AND FIELD TEAM, CURRENTLY IN CHINA, IS DRAWING NOT ONLY FAVORABLE PRESS COMMENTS BUT STANDING-ROOM-ONLY SPECTATORS. NCNA MAY 25 ALSO CARRIED A COLLECTION OF UPBEAT

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COMMENTS BY AMERICAN EDITORIALISTS AND COLUMNISTS. THESE VIEWED THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR AS A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR US FOREIGN POLICY TO CONCENTRATE ON EUROPE AND OTHER MORE IMPORTANT AREAS AND STRESSED AMERICAN RESOLVE TO COUNTER ANY SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF POSSIBLE AMERICAN DISTRACTION FROM TRADITIONAL GEOPOLITICAL AREAS OF INTEREST. NCNA ALSO CONTINUES TO CARRY COMMENTS BY EUROPEAN LEADERS CONCERNING THE NEED FOR A US MILITARY PRESENCE IN EUROPE.

4. ANOTHER STRIKING ELEMENT OF THE CURRENT PRC PROPAGANDA IS ITS CONTINUING ATTEMPT TO DRAG IN ANTI-SOVIET COMMENTS, OFTEN IN A RATHER CONTRIVED FASHION. PEKING HAS BEEN GLEEFUL IN REPORTING THE EGYPTIAN PLAY OBVIOUSLY SATIRIZING SOVIET AID, WHICH WAS FIRST BANNED AND THEN PERMITTED TO CONTINUE ITS PERFORMANCES. SOVIET LACK OF ENTHUSIASM IN SUPPORTING THE GRUNK AND THE PRG IS CURRENTLY A MAJOR THEME OF PRC PROPAGANDA AND IS OBVIOUSLY AIMED AT UNDERCUTTING THE POSSIBILITY OF INCREASED SOVIET INFLUENCE IN INDOCHINA AND THE REST OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. PRC MEDIA ALSO CONTINUES TO HARP ON THE SOVIET THREAT TO EUROPE.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT THE EARLIER INCREASE IN ANTI-US PROPAGANDA, BOTH IN FREQUENCY AND IN INVECTIVE, HAD LITTLE TO DO WITH PEKING'S REAL INTERESTS BOTH IN MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE US AND IN A CONTINUED US WORLD ROLE. RATHER, IT WAS RESPONSIVE TO THE SITUATION, TEMPORARY IN NATURE, AND HAS PLAYED OUT QUICKLY ONCE EVENTS PEAKED. AS INDOCHINA SETTLES DOWN, THE OTHER THEMES OF THE US COUNTERING SOVIET EFFORTS AT WORLD HEGEMONY AND OF A STRENGTHENED US PLAYING A VITAL ROLE IN EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND OTHER AREAS INCLUDING JAPAN SHOULD BECOME OF INCREASING ATTENTION TO THE PRC PROPAGANDISTS.

6. AT THE SAME TIME, WE SEE PEKING FEELING REQUIRED TO COMMENT WHENEVER EVENTS SUCH AS THE MAYAGUEZ AFFAIR OCCUR AND ESPECIALLY WHEN A DIRECT PEKING ROLE (PASSING OF NOTES TO THE CAMBODIANS) IS FEATURED. THUS, WHILE ANTI-AMERICAN ARTICLES WILL CONTINUE TO BE CARRIED BY NCNA AS EVENTS WARRANT, THE MAIN THRUST OF PEKING'S PROPAGANDA AS WE SEE IT DEVELOPING WILL PROBABLY BE COMPLEMENTARY TO OUR OWN EFFORTS IN PORTRAYING AN AMERICA STILL HEAVILY INVOLVED IN WORLD AFFAIRS AND DETERMINED

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TO MEET ITS COMMITMENTS WORLDWIDE.
CROSS

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